

Mental Health and Substance Abuse Benefit Plan Year 2007

House Bill 615 passed during the last Legislative session established a pilot program to determine the additional costs of providing an enhanced mental health benefit to State employees and their dependents. This bill required that for a three-year period beginning with Fiscal Year 2007, certain Serious Mental Illnesses (SMI) as well as Serious Emotional Disturbances in children, be treated exactly the same as any other medical condition. The seven SMI defined in the bill are:

- Schizophrenia
- Paranoia and other psychotic episodes
- Bipolar disorders
- Major Depressive disorders
- Schizoaffective disorders
- Panic disorders and
- Obsessive-compulsive disorders.

Serious Emotional Disturbance in children is defined in Idaho Code as “an emotional or behavioral disorder, or a neuropsychiatric condition which results in a serious disability, and which requires sustained treatment interventions, and causes the child's functioning to be impaired in thought, perception, affect or behavior. A disorder shall be considered to "result in a serious disability" if it causes substantial impairment of functioning in family, school or community.”

Because the Legislation required that these specific mental illnesses be treated the same as any other medical condition, the Integrated Behavioral Health Program (IBHP) has been eliminated and the overall mental health benefit redesigned to reflect Legislative intent.

Effective July 1, 2006, all mental health benefits will be included under the major medical plan administered by Blue Cross of Idaho and will be subject to the same deductible, coinsurance and out-of-pocket maximums as the medical plan you are enrolled in (see chart below for detailed explanation).

Mental Health conditions not defined as Serious Mental Illness or as a Serious Emotional Disturbance in children will be subject to an annual treatment limit of any combination of thirty (30) outpatient visits or eight (8) days of inpatient treatment stays. These limits are the equivalent of the 200 hour annual benefit under the former IBHP program.

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) will continue as it is currently designed. All benefits eligible members will have up to five (5) EAP visits per year. All requests for authorization of EAP, Mental Health and/or Substance Abuse Services must be directed to Business Psychology Associates at 1-877-427-2327, Treasure Valley residents may call 343-4180.

New ID cards reflecting the pre-authorization requirement and telephone numbers will be sent by the end of August.